



Billing Code: 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC218

Marine Mammals; File No. 17298

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; issuance of permit.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that a permit has been issued to Mystic Aquarium, Mystic, Connecticut 06355 [Responsible Party: Stephen Coan, Ph.D.] to collect, import, export, and receive marine mammal parts for scientific research.

ADDRESSES: The permit and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)427-8401; fax (301)713-0376; and

Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; phone (978)281-9328; fax (978) 281-9394.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy Sloan or Jennifer Skidmore, (301)427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On October 2, 2012, notice was published in the Federal Register (77 FR 60107) that a request for a permit to conduct research on marine

mammals parts had been submitted by the above-named applicant. The requested permit has been issued under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR parts 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 et seq.).

The permit authorizes Mystic Aquarium to annually collect, receive, import and export biological samples from 5,000 individual cetaceans and 5,000 individual pinnipeds under NMFS jurisdiction to conduct studies of diet and nutrition, disease, immune function, environmental stressors, toxicology and health of marine mammals. No takes of live animals, direct or indirect, are authorized by the permit. The permit expires on April 1, 2018.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), a final determination has been made that the activity proposed is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

As required by the ESA, issuance of this permit was based on a finding that such permit: (1) was applied for in good faith; (2) will not operate to the disadvantage of such endangered species; and (3) is consistent with the purposes and policies set forth in section 2 of the ESA.

Dated: April 16, 2013.

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P. Michael Payne, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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